

Tom Brown's School Museum

Celebrating 400 years of Education in Uffington

“The school for 12 worthy boys was founded in Uffington in 1617 by Thomas Saunders” This will be the opening line for the museum's 2017 exhibition as we celebrate 400 years of education in Uffington. Preparation is well under way and will tell the story from Thomas Saunders through to the present day primary school. There will also be a display about the history of the building and how it has survived 400 years. The official launch evening will be held on Tuesday 11th April please save this date.

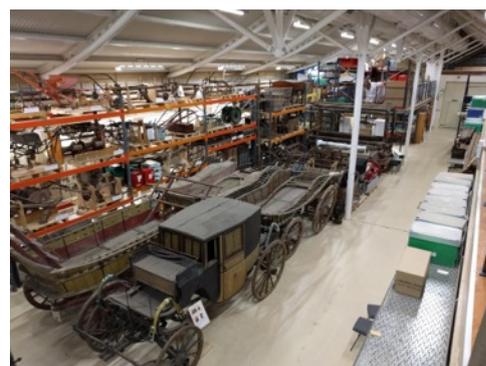


Visiting Museums Resource Centre

In December we visited Oxfordshire's Resource Centre in Standlake which is run by the County Council and collects and preserves a wide range of archaeological and historical objects carefully selected to reflect life in Oxfordshire. They hold over 94,000 items including textiles, photographs, paintings and archaeology records and objects. Over half of these are currently out on display in museums in Woodstock, Oxford, Abingdon, Wantage and Banbury and other small museums. The building has a tent shaped roof designed to

recall a medieval pavilion and weather vanes made by artist Ray Smith which were inspired by museum objects housed in the centre. Inside the building the atmosphere is altered with the seasons, buffering the collections from the sudden variations in humidity and temperature that can cause objects to crack. It was a fascinating visit and they have agreed to loan the museum a number of items that will complement our exhibition in 2017.

The photograph opposite is of full sized Victorian carriages and hay wagons which illustrates the size of the resource centre.



Did you know?.....

www.britishpathe.com/vid.../tom-browns-country/query/uffington

There is a lovely 1 minute film on Pathe news from 1942 on 'Tom Brown's Country' featuring Uffington. It includes the museum which at the time would have been the village reading room. It also shows cottages and houses from the time and talks about not being able to see the White Horse – covered up during the war so that the German bombers could not use it as navigation. Does anyone have any names for the 3 gents enjoying a pint outside the pub?

Are you related to James Bailey or his descendants?

On Remembrance Sunday we welcomed the family of James Bailey, a resident of Uffington in the early 1900's who went to war in 1914 and unfortunately did not return. James was the youngest of 9 brothers and his family are hoping that they have descendants who are still living in the village. We were able to provide a lot of information and photographs from our museum archives and they would love to hear from anyone who is related and has any stories to share.

My name is Diane Barnes and I would like to share my family connections and memories of Uffington. As you read this article my family and I hope to generate more leads to those who once had ties with this wonderful place.

My mother Doris Bailey was born in Uffington 13th May 1913. Her mother and father were Daisy Bailey and James Bailey and she had brothers and sisters too. Doris passed away 4 years ago at the grand age of 99. She often spoke of her childhood growing up in Uffington with much fondness. It comes as no surprise then that we have come back to visit on a number of occasions. Each time a new chapter unfolds.

Doris was christened at the parish church and her name is recorded in the church records. We never knew this until we took her there one day and the vicar got the book to show Doris. That was a very special moment for us all too. The actual font is still there also.

My mother also spent her childhood in Uffington at a time when life was pretty hard going. Despite this she would not change it for the world, as she said that for her and her brothers and sisters they were happy times. It was all very much farmland with horses and carts etc. Doris would spend the day playing up at 'white horse hill' with her brothers Jim, Joe and sisters Hilda and Freida. Joe and young James would rescue injured birds and bring them home and during the winter when they had snow they would all go sledding down the 'Manger' and walk to someone's house to get toffee apples! They were friends with the 'Packer' family too (whom we hope we can trace). It may have been them.

She attended the local school at the age of 3 and by the time she reached 14 and left, she got a job and her sister Freida too at the Vicarage doing domestic work and always spoke kindly of the Vicar I remember my mother saying that when they had finished work at the Vicarage it was so dark and to get home she would have to run down a long pathway (where the red phone box is now) she was petrified and ran as fast as possible in order to get home. There were no street lights back then!

My mother's father (James Bailey) left Uffington for the 1st world war when Doris was 3 years old. She can remember him saying to Daisy "I may never see you again" and he was right. The last memory Doris has was watching him leave the village and turning back waving. He was killed in the Somme but we never knew where, when or how. When he didn't come back from the war this had a disastrous effect on the family leaving Daisy Bailey in a difficult situation with children to raise. According to the information in the museum my mother and her brother & sisters then moved into a cottage type house in the village known as 'Bailey Corner'. We always thought that they had moved in with the grandfather but according to the records it was more likely to have been James Bailey's older brother. Can you imagine how cramped those conditions must have been but they never complained. It was all such fond memories for my mother.

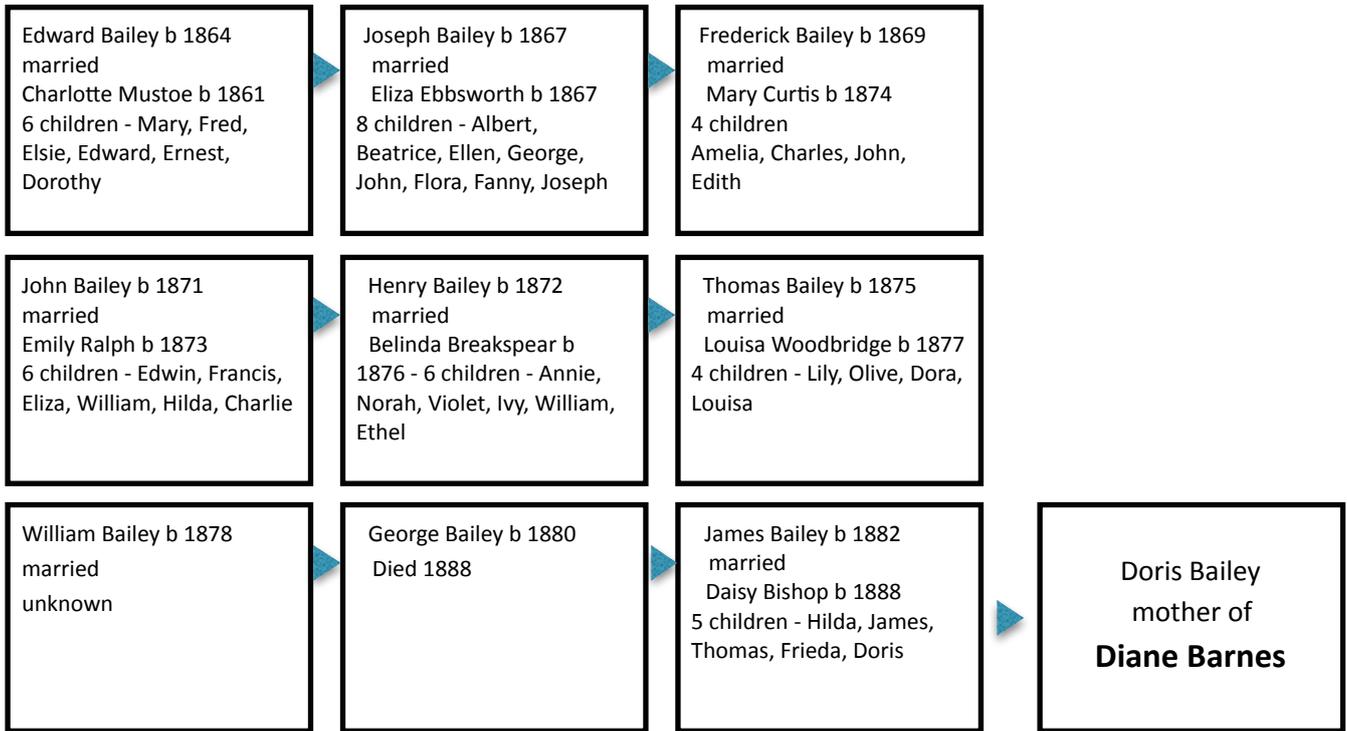
We've since discovered that James Bailey was in fact a Sergeant and his name is proudly remembered at the top of the cenotaph in the churchyard in Uffington. We couldn't help but dig deeper into his history so 3 years ago my niece by chance visited the village and the local museum were commemorating the 100th anniversary of WW1. To her amazement there was a photo of SGT James Bailey staring right back at her! It was so exciting to actually see his picture as my sister and I never knew him. It was such a shame by this time that Doris had passed away as we had also managed to trace his steps and resting place in France. Can you imagine my mother's delight if only she had got to know this before her passing! It is a beautiful resting place with amazing views in 'Les Beoufs' The Guards Cemetery. We took some of the soil from his grave and brought it to Uffington cenotaph as we felt it was important to bring a part of him home.

If any family descendants from his comrades ever visit please do make sure you sign in the visitors book there as you will be surprised how many people from nearby areas in the UK go to pay their respects. It could be that James Bailey (considering he was from a large family) still has relatives with connections to my family so there must be relatives to us still in Uffington? It is only just recently meeting the new Curator at the museum that we also discovered that 'Pam Ayres' the poet is also related to the Bailey family. Hilda (Doris sister) used to talk about this and Aunt Addie!!

My only wish was that I had found out about my mother's family whilst she was alive. Uffington was her favourite place and even in her hospital bed she would talk about the good old days and smile.

Our next mission is to trace any later generation relatives from James Bailey that may still live in Uffington especially as the Baileys were such a large family. We would like to thank the new Curator of Uffington museum for all her hard work and time and effort in meeting with us from the bottom of our hearts. Cont...

Bailey Family History



Clearing museum grounds

On two separate days in the last two weeks volunteers have gathered at the museum armed with gardening tools and wheels barrows. On the first occasion we cleared the gardens of brambles, ivy and overgrowth. On the second we were able to clear a considerable mound of rubble from the neighbouring garden which was piled against the museum wall. It was necessary to move this rubble to enable access to the walls of the museum for the planned repair work.



Update on the school building

As owner of the building the Parish Council is delighted to advise that two grant applications for funding to repair the museum walls have been successful. The VWHDC through their New Homes Build Scheme have supported the project and the amount has been matched by the White Horse Show Trust. We are extremely grateful to

both organisations for awarding the grant which will go a long way towards the overall cost. The Parish Council are also supporting the fund raising however there is still a shortfall of approx. £6,500. If anyone would be prepared to assist in the preservation of this ancient and historic building then donations can be sent to Simon Jenkins at South Paddock House 'Uffington.

Open Evening Success

Our Open Evening last December was a great success. With the museum “decked with bows of Holly” (thank you Maurice!), mulled wine, soft drinks and mince pies on offer we enjoyed a constant flow of visitors all evening. Villagers young and old, Brownies, Beavers, young mothers, new friends and loyal supporters all come to raise a glass with us, start the festive season and see our plans for the future. Perhaps this could become an annual event?



Reminder of Friends of TBSM AGM

The AGM of the Friends of Tom Brown’s School Museum will be held in the museum on Tuesday **28th February at 7:30pm** and everyone is welcome. The agenda will include election of the committee and after 8 years Anthony Parsons is standing down. We are therefore looking for a new member to join from the Friends. Please contact Jo Coad on 01367 820428 for further

If you regularly shop online Easyfundraising is a simple and safe way to help raise funds for the museum. Register with Easy fundraising; name Tom Brown’s School Museum as your chosen cause. Then follow the links to your favourite shopping site; shop online as you normally would and Easyfundraising will automatically donate a percentage of the money you spend to your named cause.



Friends of Tom Brown’s School Museum Committee

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